



The AWAR²E group includes, from left, Colleen Best, Deep Khosa, Andria Jones-Bitton, Peter Conlon and Joanne Hewson.

Multi-pronged approach to mental health and wellness

A SHARED VISION BRINGING five Ontario Veterinary College researchers together is the first step in a multi-pronged approach to mental health and wellness initiatives for veterinarians, student veterinarians and agricultural producers.

The AWAR²E group – Advancement of Wellness and Resilience in Research and Education – combines expertise in a variety of areas.

The U of G group, which came together in spring 2015, includes Colleen Best, post-doctoral fellow; Prof. Joanne Hewson, Clinical Studies; Prof. Andria Jones-Bitton and Prof. Deep Khosa, both in Population Medicine; and Peter Conlon, associate dean, students.

The group saw “growing anecdotal evidence

that our colleagues are not doing so well in terms of their wellness and resilience, and that some farmers may also be facing challenges with respect to the many stresses they face,” says Jones-Bitton.

The AWAR²E group came together to do research “so we could make evidence-based interventions to help both of these populations,” she adds.

On the agriculture side, Jones-Bitton is evaluating data from a producer wellness survey conducted in fall 2015. Initiatives are planned to better equip Ontario agriculture to proactively address mental health, including mental health literacy

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Two OVC equine clinicians have received Honorary Member Awards from the Ontario Association of Equine Practitioners (OAEP). Drs. **Peter Physick-Sheard**, Population Medicine, and **Laurent Viel**, Clinical Studies,

received the awards at the OAEP annual meeting in February 2016. The Honorary Member Award is presented to those who have made noteworthy and outstanding contributions to equine practice.

FROM THE DEAN

OVC community integral to college success

I OFTEN REFER TO the OVC as a community and for good reason. Our students, staff and faculty all work closely together on our main pursuits, education, research and service.

This support and cooperation was vital in our recent successful accreditation through the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Council on Education (COE). We received the good news earlier this year that OVC has been accredited for another seven years, the maximum permitted.

The AVMA, in conjunction with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association Council (CVMA), is mandated to develop standards and conduct reviews of professional veterinary programs in Canada, the United States and, by invitation, many overseas jurisdictions. This process is very important in setting a worldwide standard for quality in veterinary medical education: seven of the top 10 veterinary programs in the world (QS rankings 2016) are AVMA/CVMA accredited, including our own.



Members of the AVMA COE attend an accreditation site visit at OVC.

Approval for construction of the first phase of the 2015 Master Plan, the advanced surgical and anesthesia facilities, was a key piece in clinching the next seven years of accreditation. These improvements will not only provide state-of-the-art facilities, they will ensure we maintain OVC as a leading veterinary college for innovative education, clinical and research activities for many years to come.

Our success in all these areas is due in no small part to the cooperation and hard work of everyone in the OVC community who work together to develop and deliver the quality professional veterinary program and world-class research programs we provide.

This sense of community is also an important factor in our ongoing work in mental health and wellness initiatives,

a timely topic in the veterinary and agricultural communities. The recently established AWARD²E group (Advancement of Wellness and Resilience in Research and Education) is taking a multi-pronged approach in this area, including research into depression, anxiety, compassion fatigue, burnout and resilience among our veterinary colleagues, as well as curricular opportunities for our student veterinarians.

We have many alumni who are making their own contributions to the mental health and well-being of our colleagues and clients. The college and our alumni can be proud of our many successes this past year and look forward to the many opportunities we will embrace in the future.

Dean Jeffrey Wichtel

An innovative summer student research program at OVC has a new name to better reflect the opportunities it offers. The summer **Career Opportunities and Research Experience (CORE)** program offers B.Sc., DVM and other

summer student researchers at OVC a stimulating slate of events from May to August. Opportunities include field trips to cutting-edge research facilities and attendance at scientific conferences and professional development

workshops, while complementing primary research and educational activities with faculty advisers. The program is designed to nurture undergraduate students' interest in research, academia and graduate or residency programs.

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training and emergency response programming.

The underlying challenges with mental health are not unique to veterinary medicine, says Hewson. "They are common across many disciplines."

Zoetis has committed \$130,000 over three years to help the OVC researchers understand factors affecting the mental well-being of veterinarians, with the goal of developing training and other support programs for both veterinary students and practicing veterinarians.

A survey of Ontario veterinarians conducted last summer by the AWAR²E group will be followed up this year with a Canada-wide veterinarian survey looking at the prevalence of depression, anxiety, compassion fatigue, burnout and resilience.

The group will also engage in a qualitative study with veterinarians, with funding from Zoetis and OVC Pet Trust, focusing on veterinarians' experience with mental health issues.

The group is passionate about trying

to support and prepare students better for veterinary practice.

"It's a lot easier to effect change when they are students before they go out in practice and are busy trying to get through the day," says Best.

"We know stress is out there and it's inescapable," adds Khosa. "So we should be preparing them to acknowledge it and provide coping mechanisms to deal with it as well."

In response to this, the AWAR²E group has already started several initiatives within the DVM program. A first-year camp as a part of Orientation Week is being planned to foster a positive introduction to veterinary school and reinforce this as a supportive environment. "They are going to be here for four years," says Khosa. "It's important they develop relationships and bonds early on and hopefully carry them all the way through."

Curricular elements are also critical in building student confidence. Communication is a major piece of the DVM curriculum through the "Art of Veterinary

Medicine" courses in first, second and third year, says Conlon. Being able to integrate communication skills, knowledge and behaviours with other subjects such as clinical medicine, "increases students' confidence and that in turn reduces stress," he adds.

A one-week Wellness Rotation will be available to fourth-year student veterinarians starting in the 2016-2017 school year. The program will focus on an evidence-based understanding of mental wellness and resilience, including mind-body techniques, relaxation techniques, financial planning and self-care, including exercise and nutrition.

"It all falls under the umbrella of trying to help them with mental health and wellness throughout their four years with us," says Hewson.

"I'm proud of us as a veterinary college that we're devoting resources and have so quickly assembled a team," adds Best. "And we're grateful to Zoetis for sharing our passion and their willingness to support the AWAR²E group at this early stage."

Also at OVC

■ One of the philosophies at OVC is to provide students with the resources they need to help themselves. Sometimes that may mean reaching out to others for assistance. Bruno Mancini, University of Guelph **wellness counsellor**, is available at OVC two-and-a-half days a week for DVM students.

■ An on-site **Wellness Corner** will soon provide OVC students with a well-earned break from their studies. Stocked with materials funded in part by the Student Equipment Fund, the space will allow students to refresh and regroup right within the building. "The fact that there's space dedicated to it indicates the importance we place on it," says Dr. Joanne Hewson.

■ The University's **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** is available to employees who need confidential, professional counselling for a variety of issues. Full details about the program can be found on the U of G website under Faculty and Staff Human Resources: www.uoguelph.ca/hr/staff-faculty-health-well-being/employee-assistance-program



The **OVC Class of 1990's** 25th anniversary included participation in the CIBC Run for the Cure to honour classmate Darya Campbell, who lost her fight with breast cancer in 1998. The class's virtual team allows anyone to take part or

donate regardless of location. It was among the top 10 virtual Run for the Cure teams in the country in 2015, raising more than \$2,700. The virtual team will continue annually to honour Campbell and inspire donations to this important cause.

ALUMNI NEWS

Grad focuses on geriatric and hospice care



Dr. Faith Banks with Smudge and B.D.

DR. FAITH BANKS HAD been working in a small-animal practice for several years when she noticed that her own 10-year-old Bernese mountain dog, Smudge, was showing signs of aging. While she had strategies to help her dog, she realized that many of her clients with older dogs didn't bring them into the clinic. Vet visits can be stressful for dogs, and the clients often figured there was nothing that could be done

to help their pets anyway.

"Older dogs can really suffer, though, if their pain isn't managed," Banks says. "Around the same time I saw an article on hospice at home for dogs and cats, and I knew I'd found what I wanted to do."

Banks, who graduated from OVC in 1996, now runs Midtown Mobile Veterinary Services in Toronto, providing geriatric, hospice and end-of-life care

for dogs and cats in the comfort of their own homes. Banks sees the service as providing three main things: complete geriatric examinations; in-depth consultations with the clients to help plan for their animals; and in-home euthanasia when that is deemed to be the best option.

During her exam and consultation, Banks finds she is often able to help clients modify their home environment to make life easier for their pet. In other cases, medications can help keep the animal more comfortable. She also discusses how the animal's health might change and then plans for end-of-life care.

She adds: "I don't see death as a failure. In fact, I feel honoured to be present with the owners and their pets at this important time, helping to make it as stress-free, meaningful and peaceful as possible."

When she does euthanize a dog or cat, Banks makes a donation to OVC's Pet Trust to honour the animal. "People are very touched by this, and to know that even in death their pet is helping others," she says. "And I am very happy to be supporting the important work Pet Trust does."

In October 2015 **OVC Pet Trust** launched a \$9-million campaign to create new advanced surgery and anesthesia facilities in the OVC Health Sciences Centre. As of April 2016, \$6.5 million in private donations have been committed.



The facilities will include specialized areas for surgery, anesthesia and recovery, and the first dedicated suite for minimally-invasive procedures at a veterinary teaching hospital in Canada. For more information, visit www.pettrust.ca.

COLLEGE NEWS

OVC gets \$23-million provincial investment

A \$23-MILLION INVESTMENT FROM the provincial government will support critical infrastructure renewal at OVC.

The investment announced in mid-March by Reza Moridi, minister of training, colleges and universities, and Liz Sandals, minister of education and MPP for Guelph, will support renovation and expansion at OVC, including new spaces for enhanced clinical teaching and learning and advanced surgery and anesthesia facilities.

The University had asked the government for \$23 million toward a \$33-million plan to address infrastructure deficiencies at the veterinary college. OVC plans to raise the additional \$10 million, with \$6.5 million already committed.

Construction of the surgery and anesthesia facilities is set to begin this summer in renovated spaces within OVC's Health Sciences Centre. The college will also install new equipment and improved biosecurity and infection control.

The enhanced clinical teaching and learning spaces, which will be built adjacent to OVC's Lifetime Learning Centre, will include new laboratory and



Franco Vaccarino, U of G president, far left; Reza Moridi, minister of training, colleges and universities, centre; and Liz Sandals, minister of education and Guelph MPP, far right, attend a mock surgical demonstration.

classroom spaces equipped for computer-based case studies, patient simulators and demonstration models.

"OVC is the province's only veterinary medical college," said U of G president Franco Vaccarino. "This critical funding will support our continued accreditation. It will also help us maintain our leadership position in innovative education and research, and in understanding the powerful connection between animal and human health."

OVC dean Jeff Wichtel said the University and OVC have invested in research to remain at the leading edge of learning, care and discovery, but improvements to physical spaces have

not kept pace.

"Current and future veterinarians must have the skills and knowledge required to meet the health demands of our province," he said. "This requires state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, and innovative learning and training programs."

The surgery and anesthesia facilities and enhanced student spaces are the first two phases in OVC's updated Master Plan. The current plan, updated in 2015, builds on the success of previous work in the late 1990s and again in 2009. Implementation will occur over a period of time as funds become available while maintaining a fully functional facility.



The **OVC 1980 Veterinary Mental Health Awareness Fund** was established to recognize the class's 35th reunion in 2015 and to give back to the profession. By supporting this project the class is equipping future veterinarians to recog-

nize and cope with mental health issues such as depression, stress and burnout, as well as supporting wellness initiatives for DVM students at OVC, including invited speakers, enhanced peer-to-peer support and wellness resources.

COLLEGE NEWS

New faces join OVCAA board

TWO NEW FACES HAVE joined the OVC Alumni Association: Dr. Tiffany Durzi as treasurer and Dr. Matt Spiegle as vice-president.

Durzi, DVM '00, joined the OVC Smith Lane Animal Hospital located in the Hill's Pet Nutrition Primary Healthcare Centre in 2010 as a primary care veterinary educator. She is a certified canine rehabilitation therapist, certified acupuncturist and certified veterinary pain practitioner. She is the chief of service at the OVC Fitness and Rehabilitation Service. Previously, she worked at St. Matthew's University School of Veterinary Medicine in Grand Cayman.

"I love the positive energy and intellectual atmosphere of OVC," says Durzi. "I am excited for the opportunity to stay connected with the amazing alumni of the school and to be part of the OVC Alumni Association."

A second-generation veterinarian, Spiegle has been around veterinary medicine his whole life. He worked as a small-animal practitioner in Toronto before joining Royal Canin in 2014 as a technical services veterinarian, providing technical support for the case consultation service. He is currently a scientific communications veterinarian "in the field." He has special interests in nutrition, internal medicine and ultrasonography.

"My years at OVC were among the best of my life," says Spiegle, DVM '08. "I feel honoured to be working with this wonderful team to help bridge the gap between the college and its alumni."



Ontario Veterinary Class

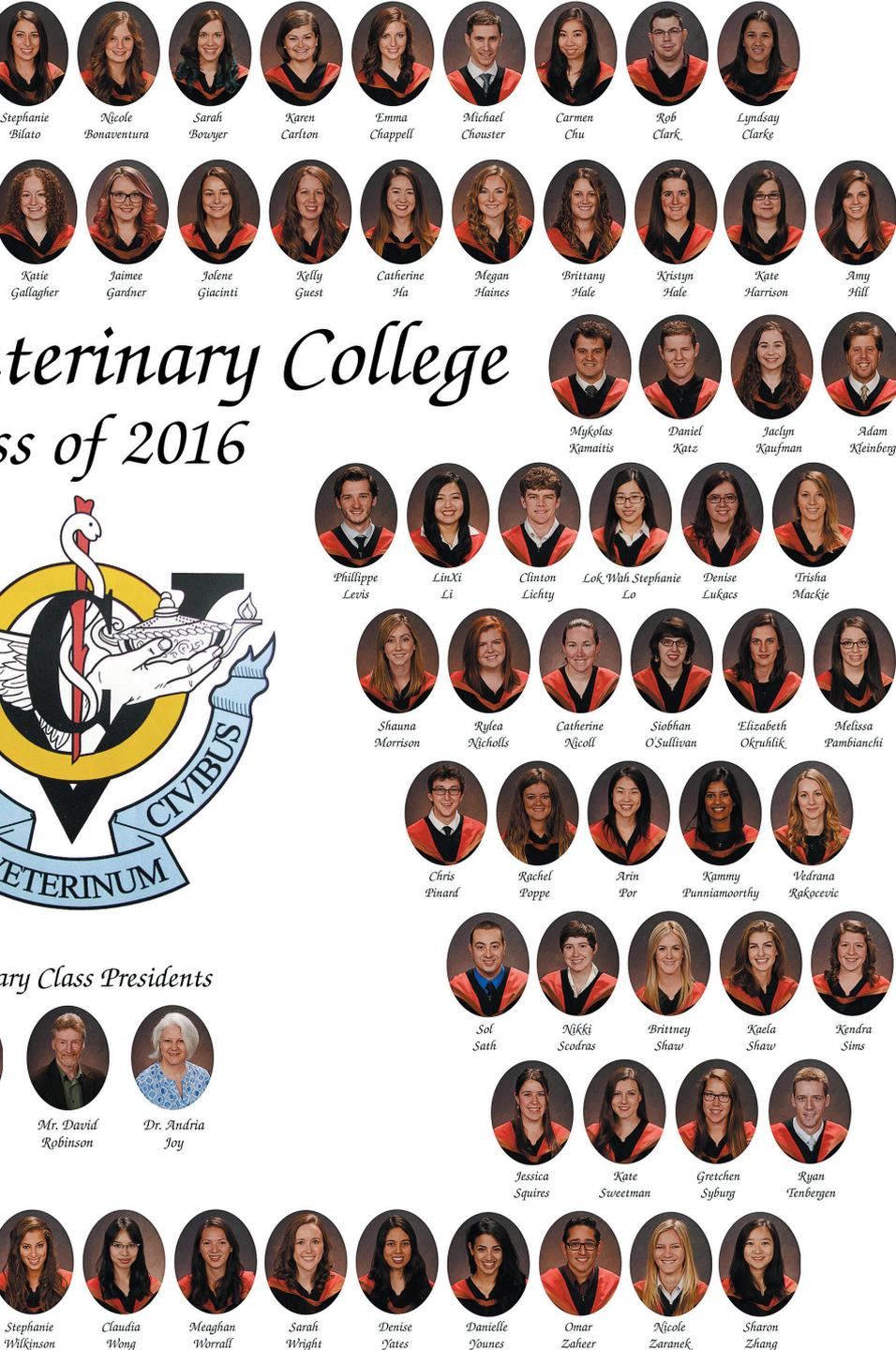


Honore Dr. John Prescott

Dr. Sonja Fonfara joined OVC as a clinical cardiologist in February 2016. Previously she was with the Cardiology Service at the School of Veterinary Sciences, University of Bristol, England. Fonfara obtained board certification



from the European College of Veterinary Internal Medicine in cardiology in 2010. Her research interests are in cardiac inflammation and remodeling in canine and feline cardiac and systemic diseases.



terinary College ss of 2016



ary Class Presidents



Workshops provide wellness strategies

The Office of the Associate Dean of Students is hosting a series of Wellness Wednesday workshops for OVC students designed to provide them with strategies to enhance resiliency and bounce back from stress. Talks run through the eight months of the DVM program.

“We are very pleased that Zoetis Canada has sponsored this important initiative for our students,” says Dr. Peter Conlon, associate dean, students.

Conlon has attended the three annual Veterinary Health and Wellness Summits, supported in partnership with Zoetis, based in New Jersey, and the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges, where many aspects of veterinarian wellness – emotional, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social and spiritual – have been discussed.

Working with the OVC peer helpers, he proposed a series of talks centred on these topics to promote wellness in OVC’s student veterinarians and provide them with appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours that they can take into their future careers.

Elizabeth Lowenger, manager student affairs, coordinates the peer helper program and the Wellness Wednesday workshops.

Topics this year included thriving in first year, optimal performance and health skills; making the most of your learning style; studying smarter for the DVM program; sleeping for success; everyday mindfulness; compassion fatigue DVM style; recognizing stress and impairment; a guide to good emotional health; and healthy relationships.

Anderson-Coutts Photography



The **Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's Veterinary Wellness Advisory Group** is developing and promoting veterinary wellness initiatives and programs for members at a national level. These initiatives will comple-

ment provincial programs and help groups and provincial veterinary medical associations to expand their own wellness programs.

ALUMNI NEWS

Education and awareness vital to manage stresses of veterinary practice

"VETERINARY MEDICINE IS ABOUT the health and welfare of animals," says Dr. Debbie Stoewen, director of veterinary services for Pets Plus Us, "but everything happens through human interactions." She feels that not enough attention has been paid to the human side of veterinary medicine, and she's seeking to remedy that. With more than 20 years of clinical practice experience, she is intimately aware of the many challenges that life in practice can bring.

Research has shown that veterinarians are at a higher than average risk of suicide, and Stoewen (who has a master's degree in social work from Wilfrid Laurier University and a DVM '83 and PhD '12 from OVC) says that's just the tip of the iceberg. For each person who dies by suicide, there are many more who attempt suicide, suffer with clinical depression, or have other mental health issues and may not be getting help.

Education and awareness are essential to managing these issues, she says, and since January 2014 she has been providing educational seminars on veterinary wellness from "The Social Side of Practice," a fully-accredited veterinary continuing education program on the non-medical aspects of practice.



Dr. Debbie Stoewen and Max

Stoewen speaks to veterinarians, vet techs and other members of the veterinary care team. "I've had people come up to me a year later and say that they

changed this or that after a seminar, and that it's really helped."

Stoewen is currently working on the second module of this program, to be called "Veterinary Happiness."

In addition to leading seminars for those working in the veterinary field, Stoewen serves as the care and empathy officer (CEO) of Pets Plus Us Compassionate Care Service, using her veterinary and social work skills to provide pet loss counselling. "Our company really 'gets' the human-animal bond," she says. "When someone loses a pet, we don't just cancel their pet's health insurance policy. We're still there to support them."

The success of both programs has surprised her, she adds. "People are so grateful. You don't necessarily know the impact you're having until you hear back later about how much it helped. That means a lot."

Four basic points from **MODULE 1: VETERINARY WELLNESS**

1. Be aware of the risk of mental health problems.
2. Commit to protecting your own mental health.
3. Follow through with the changes needed.
4. Connect and share with your colleagues to support each other.

The **Ontario Veterinary Medical Association's** (OVMA) Member Assistance Program (MAP) provides a variety of free services to members, their spouses and dependents, including stress management and relationship

counselling, child and eldercare resources, nutritional advice, financial planning and more. Student veterinarians may also access the services offered by this program. More information is available on the OVMA website at

www.ovma.org/veterinarians/your-wellbeing/MAP/.

ALUMNI NEWS

Tip from a grad: go where you feel supported

REACHING OUT TO HELP others has always been important to Christian McFarlane.

It's one of the reasons he joined the peer helper program as a student at OVC and one of the reasons he continues to be available to DVM students whenever they reach out for time management advice, study tips or queries on work-life balance.

Initiated by the Office of the Associate Dean, Students, the peer helper program provides broad-based support to all OVC student veterinarians. Two OVC student veterinarian peer helpers in each class are available to assist their classmates with personal and academic matters.

McFarlane, DVM '15, returns to OVC each fall to provide a presentation to new DVM students during orientation, talking about his own experiences with clinical depression and anxiety, and how the peer helper program helped him both as a beneficiary and as a helper. "The worst six months of my life was the first six months of veterinary school," he says. "It's a daunting program mentally, physically and emotionally. One of the aims of the peer helper program is to help people be more resilient."

He includes his contact info in his presentation and an open invitation to reach out with questions. He also knows the greatest therapy is having someone to talk to – "I've found the majority of my work is just being accessible."

McFarlane practices companion animal medicine at Village Vet Clinic of Hamburg in Hamburg, New York. Previously he was with Dundas Animal Hospital in Dundas, Ont., where he also completed his externship.

"One piece of advice to new grads: go where you will feel the most supported," adds McFarlane. "The support I have felt



Dr. Christian McFarlane

at both jobs has been exemplary."

He found the primary healthcare rotation one of the most helpful rotations, he says. Every veterinary discipline is important but being able to talk to people is critical. "It's one of the things we do the most, from obtaining info to breaking bad news or having to make difficult decisions."

One of the biggest challenges in moving from school to practice is confidence, he adds. "We tend to devalue our time and skills because we are new. Your time and expertise are worth something, and you should be confident in them."

"We pour so much of ourselves into others we forget to help ourselves," he adds. The ongoing conversation and continued support from veterinarians in the profession and at school continues to shine a light on this important conversation.



University of Guelph scientists working to improve cancer therapy for dogs and potentially enhance human cancer treatment received a \$100,000 grant from Ontario Centres of Excellence. Principal investigator **Brenda Coomber**,

Biomedical Sciences, and co-director of U of G's Institute for Comparative Cancer Investigation, will work with Rna Diagnostics of Toronto to study dogs with advanced lymphoma, one of the most prevalent canine cancers.

COLLEGE NEWS

Counsellor supports pet owners through difficult decisions

“EVERYONE WHO COMES TO the Animal Cancer Centre is in crisis because of their animal’s diagnosis,” says Bojena Kelmendi, clinical counsellor. “And when you are in crisis, it is very difficult to make decisions.”

With help from Kelmendi, a registered social worker whose work has focused on grief and loss, people are able to deal with their emotions and develop a plan that works for them and their pets. Kelmendi’s work at the OVC Health Sciences Centre, including the OVC Mona Campbell Centre for Animal Cancer, is funded by OVC Pet Trust.

She explains that while counselling her clients she helps them clarify options and goals, and supports them through sadness and grief if the animal’s condition worsens. In addition to meeting with people individually and keeping in touch by email or phone, she also facilitates a support group that meets once a month.

The need for support when a pet is sick or passes away continues to be significant, says Kelmendi. “As a society, we tend to be isolated. Families are smaller, people are busy and many don’t have that network of support,” she adds. “Our relationships with our animals can be very important. You can trust them,



Clinical counsellor Bojena Kelmendi

and that may be your most stable relationship in the middle of a lot of stress and change.”

Unfortunately, our animals’ lives are much shorter than ours, so loss is almost inevitable.

Kelmendi points out that sometimes family and friends may not be supportive of those who are grieving, especially if they are grieving the loss of an animal. “The expectation is that you will

get over it and move on,” she says. “But it is so crucial for us to have support to work towards healing. It can have significant effects on our physical and mental health otherwise.”

Kelmendi works on campus 14 hours per week; clients who wish to meet with her can request a referral. Her office is in the Animal Cancer Centre, but she is available to help clients from any of the OVC clinics.

Suzi Beber, a champion for innovative cancer research with a passion for helping others, received an honorary doctorate during the University of Guelph's winter convocation in February. Beber created the Smiling Blue Skies

Cancer Fund to honour her golden retriever Blues who was treated at OVC following his cancer diagnosis. Since its inception in 2001, the **Smiling Blue Skies Fund** has raised more than \$1.6 million to support OVC Pet Trust's

quest to improve our understanding and treatment of canine cancer.

RESEARCH NEWS

	<i>Pet Trust has invested more than \$7.5 million into 550 research projects to improve pet health</i>		Number of years OVC Pet Trust has been raising funds to support learning, healthcare and research to improve the lives of our pets
	1st Canadian charitable fund entirely dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of companion animals		Every year we help more than 2,000 dogs, cats and other pets in need of advanced care
	916 Veterinary Hospitals have donated more than \$5.7 million to Pet Trust since 1986		Pet Trust honours more than 30,000 beloved pets through memorial giving every year
	Pet Trust launched a \$9-million fundraising campaign to build new surgery and anesthesia facilities at the OVC in Fall 2015		\$35 million raised to help our companion animals

OVC Pet Trust celebrates three decades of helping companion animals

OVC PET TRUST at the University of Guelph is Canada's first charitable fund dedicated to improving the health and well-being of companion animals. This year marks OVC Pet Trust's 30th anniversary of helping pets and the people

who love and care for them. Pet Trust is dedicated to improving the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases that affect pets through the support of health care, research and learning at OVC.

The human-animal bond is at the

very heart of Pet Trust's mission. With the support of veterinary hospitals, individuals and alumni, donations to the Pet Memorial Program provide comfort to clients and friends who are grieving and honours the memory of a pet. Pet Trust sends an average of 30,000 memorial letters each year. Memorial gifts allow Pet Trust to support areas of greatest need in companion animal medicine and research at OVC, including canine and feline health, and a current fundraising campaign to create new surgery and anesthesia facilities at OVC.

Dr. Suzanne Hornemann, DVM '90, emphasizes the value of participating in the Pet Memorial Program whenever she performs a euthanasia. "Our clients are so much more than customers: over the years, we develop a bond with them and their pets," she says. "Making the difficult decision to euthanize a pet is never an easy one. Pet Trust's Pet Memorial Program offers a meaningful way to say goodbye – for our veterinary team as well as for our clients. Knowing our hospital's donation in memory of a pet will help advance and improve health options for our animals is rewarding and very significant to our clients."

To learn more about the program, please contact Bailey Kagan, Pet Trust outreach co-ordinator, at 519-824-4120, Ext. 58214, bkagan@uoguelph.ca, or visit www.pettrust.ca.

The Ontario Veterinary College has expanded its **social media** efforts on Instagram and Snapchat, offering a peek into what goes into a veterinary education. With more than 650 Instagram posts, almost 15,000 followers and over

102,000 post “likes,” OVC is proud to have the largest following of any veterinary college worldwide. This summer we are celebrating our alumni mentors by asking you to help us show what happens in vet school. Share your

photos of our students treating patients and working with your veterinary teams. Tag us on Instagram with @OntVetCollege or email your pics to ovcinfo@uoguelph.ca to be featured. Connect: Snap, Insta, Tweet @OntVetCollege.

ALUMNI NEWS

Student conference tackles tough topics

THE MORE THAN 300 student veterinarians attending this year’s Student Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (SCVMA) Symposium came ready to tackle some of veterinary medicine’s tough subjects. “The Elephant in the Room: Stomping out the Stigma in Veterinary Medicine” did just that, with sessions focusing on cancer, obesity and mental health issues.

Topics related to mental health were covered in a compassion fatigue workshop and a biofeedback workshop. Key-note speaker Dr. Terry Whiting, DVM ’84, who served as health and wellness officer for Manitoba, spoke about his own experiences with mental health.

The SCVMA brings the student voice to the CVMA. “It’s a nice way to connect the school and professional aspect of veterinary medicine,” says Jamie Freeman-



Jamie Freeman-Braganca and Elizabeth Hartnett

Braganca, OVC Class of 2018, who joined the SCVMA in 2014-15 for a two-year term, and chaired the 2016 conference.

One of her goals was to ensure students had an opportunity to enjoy the experience. “The symposium is cool because you get to make a bunch of friends, learn really amazing

things and do some hands-on stuff for the wet labs, but there is no test at the end so you also get to enjoy yourself.”

An important piece of the conference included social media coverage throughout. Students worked with Jane Dawkins, marketing communications officer, who manages OVC’s social media. Photos, videos and Snapchat were shared throughout the conference. Search #SCVMASymposium on Instagram to see hands-on learning at the event.

COMING EVENTS

AUG. 7 TO 9

71st annual International Conference on Diseases in Nature Communicable to Man University of Guelph

SEPT. 24

Homecoming 2016
Alumni Stadium

OCT. 2

OVC Alumni Association
Continuing Education Day
OVC Lifetime Learning Centre

OCT. 15

OVC Animal Welfare Forum
OVC Lifetime Learning Centre

For more information or to register for any alumni events, please contact Stefanie Sharp at 519-824-4120, Ext. 56679, or ssharp03@uoguelph.ca.

The University of Guelph, and by extension OVC, is a registered charity. Your contributions can support the area of your choice or OVC’s highest priority at the time. Visit our giving page at www.ovc.uoguelph.ca/give. Tax receipts are provided.

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The Crest Editorial Board

Jane Dawkins

Brad Hanna

Carol Ann Higgins

Elizabeth Lowenger

Karen Mantel

Stefanie Sharp

Jeff Wichtel

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Writing/Editing

Susan Bubak

Karen Mantel

Ashleigh Martyn

Stacey Morrison

Teresa Pitman

Articles in *The Crest* do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board. We encourage you to send comments and story suggestions to: Karen Mantel
OVC Communications
519-824-4120, Ext. 52746, or kmantel@uoguelph.ca

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